

Mayor Dona Stebbins
P.O. Box 5021
Great Falls, MT 59403
dstebbins@greatfallsmt.net
406-455-8451 (Message)



SENATE JUDICIARY
EXHIBIT NO. 1
DATE 3/6/09
BILL NO. HB 308

RE: House Bill 308


Dear Senators:

The Great Falls City Commission strongly endorses adoption of HB 308, sponsored by Rep. Augare and several other legislators. This proposed legislation would give our judges greater flexibility to allow defendants to satisfy a portion of their fines by the donation of food, clothing or other necessities of life to a community organization dedicated to assisting low-income individuals.

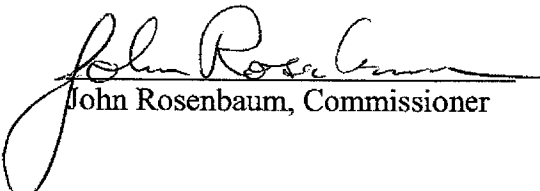
Until last year, our municipal judge gave some defendants this option. It was of tremendous benefit to our local food bank. The practice ceased when the Judicial Standards Commission raised questions whether this practice could be authorized as part of a sentence. The food bank suffered as a result. HB 308 removes any doubt that this practice is permissible.

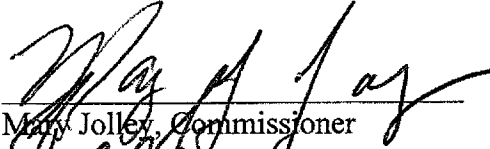

This legislation allows the courts to use the option of donations to assist the impoverished. It is a means to encourage defendants to show responsibility to those less fortunate. For these reasons, we heartily endorse adoption of HB 308.

Respectfully,


Dona R. Stebbins, Mayor


Bill Beecher, Commissioner


John Rosenbaum, Commissioner


Mary Jolley, Commissioner

Bill Bronson, Commissioner